

ITP Straw Proposal #4 v. 2 (10/30/13)

ITP – Proposed Recommendation: Projected Water Savings from Codes, Standards, Ordinances, and Transportations and Land Use Plans affecting an Urban Water Supplier's Service Area

Potential amendments to §10631(e) of the Urban Water Management Planning Act and the accompanying DWR UWMP Guidebook re Water Use Projections

The Independent Technical Panel on Demand Management Measures (ITP) recommends that the Legislature revise the Urban Water Management Planning Act to provide an option for urban water suppliers in updating their urban water management plans to incorporate water use projections that account for the estimated savings of adopted codes, standards, ordinances, and land use plans. Some, but currently not all, urban water suppliers utilize calculations of such “passive” savings in their demand reduction projections. Various laws and regulations adopted by governmental bodies are likely to have a continuing and substantial impact on urban water use, and may influence future levels of water use as much or more than the active water efficiency programs conducted by the water supplier itself. These measures include state and federal efficiency standards for plumbing products, appliances, and commercial equipment; state and local building codes governing new construction and major renovations; locally adopted versions of the California state-wide Model Landscape Ordinance; and Regional Transportation Plans and accompanying Sustainable Communities Strategies adopted by metropolitan planning organizations pursuant to SB 375 and implemented through local land use plans. As the calculation of passive savings become more commonly employed by urban water suppliers to calculate their future demands, such savings could be rolled up by wholesale water suppliers and larger retail suppliers and reported on a regional basis. The 2015 UWMP round could provide an opportunity for urban water suppliers with the ability to capture such information to report it, thus paving the way for more accurate projections in future urban water management plans. Meanwhile, projections made without regard to passive savings should so indicate.

To ensure consistency in reporting and avoid unnecessarily burdensome calculations, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) should include guidelines for the estimation of future urban water savings attributable to codes, standards, ordinances, and sustainability plans in its 2015 UWMP Guidebook, as schedules and availability of information permit. Such guidance may include acceptable state-wide default values and/or standardized calculators for entering locally-specific data.

Suggested statutory language: Add the following to Section 10631(e) of the Water Code:

“(3) Water use projections may display and account for the water savings estimated to result from adopted codes, standards, ordinances, and transportation and land use plans identified by the urban water supplier as applicable to the service area. Projections of water use that do not account for such savings shall be noted as such.